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PORTRAIT OF AN AFGHAN.

Fac-Simile of a Drawing found at Ghuznee, and supposed to be the Portrait of an Afghan Esquisite.



THE AFGHANS.

WHILST the newspapers are chronicling the appalling massacre of the Anglo-Indian force in Cabul, it may be interesting to glance at the civil and social state of the country, whose people have, by this treacherous butchery, (such as has been rarely paralleled in warfare,) defeated

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the policy of one of the most powerful empires upon the face of the globe.

The Afghans, then, who have gained this tremendous success over the Indo-British arms, are certain tribes inhabiting that portion of Independent Persia, which includes the mountainous region to the northward of the low country of the Punjab, or the plain of the Indus. The Afghans

call themselves Pushtaneh, and are termed by the Indians Patans. Afghan is the name by which they are known to Persians, and through them to Europeans. Their speech is the Pushtu, a sister-language of the Persian, with some marks of near relationship to the idiom of the Koords. Their proper country is the southern declivity of the great chain of Hindoo-Kosh, the western continuation of Himalaya and the Paropamisian range; it includes also the chain of Suliman, and the table-land to the westward of it.

The antiquity of the Afghans, as a people, is great. They are, it has been proved, the Assecani of Arrian, who gives an account of them in his history of the expedition of Alexander of Macedon. Pliny terms the same people Aspagome, and describes them in terms which leave no doubt that their country was Afghanistan. Lastly, Professor Lassen has discovered the name of this people in the catalogue of nations tributary to the Great King, engraved in cuneiform letters on the monuments of Persepolis.

"The climate of Afghanistan," says Dr. Prichard,* "is one of the most delightful in the world. It is dry, we are informed by Mr. Elphinstone, and the average temperature greater than that of England; the extremes of heat and cold being greater. According to Sir Alexander Burnes, it produces the fruits of England and of southern Europe—peaches, plums, apricots, pears, cherries, mulberries, grapes, and pomegranates; and the groves are stocked with our singing-birds—nightingales, blackbirds, thrushes, and doves. The pears and apples of Cabul are celebrated, and the seasons said to be there delightful. Cabul itself is more than 6000 feet above the level of the sea. The eastern parts of Afghanistan consist of plains, intersected by abrupt chains of hills; the western, chiefly of downs and table-lands, in many parts bleak and cold.

"In such a country, we might expect to find the people very different from the natives of Southern Hindostan. We are informed that the Afghan men are of robust make, being strong and muscular, with high nose and prominent cheek-bones, and long faces. Their hair and hands are mostly black, sometimes brown, but rarely red. Mr. Fraser describes some Patan or Afghan soldiers, whom he saw, as having red hair and blue eyes. Mr. Elphinstone says that the Eastern Afghans have generally dark complexions, approaching to that of the Hindostanees; while those of the west are of lighter colour, with an appearance of health: but among them, he says, as among the Eastern Afghans, men as dark as the Indians, and others as fair as Europeans, are to be met with in the same neighbourhood; the fair being the most common in the west, and the dark in the east. In describing a tribe of Afghans near Dera, the same writer says, 'the number of children was incredible; they were mostly fair and handsome,—the girls have aquiline noses, fine faces, Jewish features; the men were generally dark, though some were quite fair.'"

Afghanistan is divided, like the ancient kingdom of Israel, almost solely according to the tribes who inhabit it. The Durani are, at present, according to Dr. Prichard, the dominant clan, as the Eusofzyi are said to have been in earlier times; the Khyberi and Ghilji are also powerful tribes. Though one nation, and little mixed with foreigners, the Afghans differ very much among themselves in physical character, and the difference is very remarkable. The people who live near the Indus are, as Mr. Elphinstone assures us, black, and resemble the Hindoos. The Eusofzyi, who inhabit a high mountainous country, in a cool climate, are thus described: "They are generally stout men, but their form and complexion varies. In

those whose appearance is most characteristic of the tribe," says Mr. Elphinstone, "one is struck with their fair complexions, grey eyes, and red beards, by the military affectation of their carriage, and by their haughty and insolent demeanour. Indeed, they scarcely know any subordination whatever. The mountaineers, in particular, are excessively rude and ignorant. An instance is related of one of them, who, seeing a Mollah copying the Koran, struck off his head, saying: 'You tell us this is the book of God, and yet you make it yourself.' The inhabitants of the plains, on the contrary, are debauched and superstitious."

The Afghans, with their high, and even harsh features, sun-burnt countenances, long beards, loose garments, and shaggy mantles of skins, give the idea of a much ruder and more unpolished people than the Hindoos, on whom they immediately border. Many of the luxuries of Hindostan are unknown to them; and there is nothing like the same organized police and regular course of justice. Yet they are said to possess many estimable qualities:—"their martial and lofty spirit, their bold and simple manners, their sobriety and contempt of pleasure, their unbounded hospitality, and the general energy and independence of their character, render them, on the whole, a superior race. In India, every movement originates with the government, or its agents, and the people are accounted as nothing—while here, men put themselves little under control, and follow undisturbed their own inclinations."* They show great curiosity as to the products of European art and skill, with an eager disposition to inquire into the processes employed. Polygamy, and the obtaining of wives by purchase, is established; and, oddly enough, offences are punished by fines of a number of young women,† who, in this pecuniary appropriation, might properly be called "currency lasses." Matrimonial contracts are not, however, as usual in Mahometan countries, negotiated entirely by the friends of the parties, who, especially in the country districts, meet and court for themselves. But the youth must earn the purchase-money of his mistress, which condition often imparts a character of interest and adventure to the connexion, and has thus become the subject of love-tales, similar to those which are popular in Europe.

The Afghan religion is strictly Mahometan, as already intimated. The mollahs, or religious doctors, are very numerous; they take arms, and sometimes muster hosts of 2000 or 3000, who, though they cannot match the prowess of the Afghan warriors, are so aided by the superstitious awe of the multitude, as generally to carry their point. These traits are remarkable, in connexion with the document quoted at page 173 of this *Journal*, No. 67.

A taste for knowledge is general among the Afghans, though few of their works are more than two centuries old. There are schools in every little town, and even village; so that the first elements of knowledge are very widely diffused, and, the Afghans are not just now petitioning their government for grants of money to educate the people. The higher branches are logic, law, and theology; to which are added the Persian and Arabic languages and literature. The taste for poetry is very general: there are many poets by profession, and the chiefs and warriors often display genius in celebrating their own feelings and adventures.

About half the Afghan population are dwellers in tents, and they hold in disdain a residence in houses, and the occupations there carried on. The fixed habitations of the lower orders are rudely constructed of unburnt brick, with

* In his valuable "Natural History of Man," Part IV., just published.

* Murray's Encyclopædia of Geography.

† Twelve ladies form the fine for murder.

wooden roofs; the palaces and their appointments are on the Persian model.

The Afghans are violently attached to field sports: hunting is, as it were, the rage all over the country; and the fighting of quails, cocks, and other animals, is favourite pastime: with an observable inconsistency, the same persons will play at marbles, hop-sotch, and other games, considered in England as only suited to children. The *attum* is a hearty and noisy village dance, and the delight of both sexes. They are also very fond of walks and collations, in the gardens which surround their cities, particularly Cabul. Although sober and temperate, they are enabled to live well, by the extreme cheapness of all provisions, particularly fruit and vegetables. They are social and hospitable;* and even the poorer classes, when they can afford to kill a sheep, invite the neighbours to partake. The tables of the great are served after the Persian manner, and the dishes are garnished with gold and silver leaf; and the company are great talkers, though, from their gravity, it must be "an up-hill business."

The Afghan dress presents a striking contrast with the Indian attire of light, loose, flying robes, leaving a great part of the body naked. It consists of close tunics and wide mantles, composed, among the lower ranks, of sheep-skin, or coarse woollen cloth; among the higher, of velvet, fine shawl-cloth, or silk. Boots are universally worn, and no one is allowed to appear at court without them. Jewels are chiefly employed to decorate their armour. The favourite dress of the ladies is a jacket, somewhat similar to that of a dragoon, and pantaloons of velvet, shawl-cloth, or silk. Strings of Venetian sequins, chains of gold and silver, and ear-rings, are the *bijouterie*. The prefixed portrait, a supposed *exquisite*, has none of the above ornaments. In the coloured drawing, his vest is deep yellow, and cap green, and the pointed beard very dark. The original of our Engraving, (in which the rude drawing is preserved,) forms one of a series of illustrations of Afghanistan, cleverly drawn lithographs, lately published by Mr. J. F. Walton, who has courteously permitted us to copy this "Portrait of a Gentleman."

LOVE'S RAINBOW.

BY THE HON. D. G. OSBORNE.

I SMILE not, for Hope cannot move
The gloom upon my brow;
And to these lips that woo thy love,
The smile's a stranger now.
I ask thee not that bliss to share,
That lovers ever dream;
But o'er my darkened lot of care,
To fling thy young love's beam.
Is not the rainbow's varied form
So glorious to our eyes,
Because, to chase away the storm,
It shineth in the skies?
And such is woman's love,—it glows
With holier, brighter ray,
When through the storms of fate it throws
A light upon our way.

THE LATE DR. BIRKBECK.

OF this highly-distinguished individual, Dr. Clutterbuck, on January 17, read before the Medical Society of London, a brief but interesting Memoir, in which he prefatorily ob-

* The agricultural part of the Durani tribe live in small villages, to each of which is attached the castle of a khan, who seems to hold a rank in society somewhat similar to that of the Scottish laird. At one of the gates, is always a building, set apart for the reception of strangers.

serves: "From his earliest appearance as a public character in this metropolis, till almost the hour that the hand of death fell on him, I had the happiness, (as I cannot but deem it,) of possessing his uninterrupted friendship, and his fullest professional confidence. We were associated in office for a period of nearly thirty years, during which, not a single unkindly feeling, that I am aware of, existed between us. Indeed, his mild and amiable manners, not less than his upright and honourable principles, rendered it almost impossible that such should be the case."

Dr. Birkbeck was born at Settle, in Yorkshire, in the year 1776; and, after the usual course of scholastic education at a village in the neighbourhood, he commenced his studies at the University of Edinburgh, where he took his doctor's degree in physic, in the year 1790. In a Memoir in *the Times*, Dr. Birkbeck is stated to have first studied his profession at Leeds; "and then to have removed to London, where he had the good fortune to become a pupil of the celebrated Dr. Baillie, whose friendship he retained, until death put an end to that illustrious man's career. Afterwards, he removed to complete his education in Edinburgh, then in the zenith of that fame as a school of medicine, which, by means of nepotism, mismanagement, and conceit, it has subsequently lost. Here also he had the happiness to form a friendship with Brougham, Horner, Jeffrey, Scott, and others of that race, who were then beginning to blaze in the northern capital with a splendour, such as its past annals had not seen, and its future are not likely to see." But while cultivating this brilliant society, he did not neglect his scientific pursuits; and in these he had made such attainments, that, almost immediately after graduation, he was invited to offer himself as a candidate for the Professorship of Natural Philosophy, in the Andersonian Institution, Glasgow. This institution was founded by Mr. John Anderson in 1795, and endowed by him with a library, museum, and philosophical apparatus: it was incorporated the following year, and placed under the superintendence of eighty-one trustees. The object of the founder was to give instructions to the educated classes, male and female, of Glasgow, free of expense, by means of lectures on the principles of science. Dr. Birkbeck succeeded in obtaining the professorship he sought for, the duties of which he fulfilled to the entire satisfaction of the trustees, as well as of his numerous hearers. Dr. Birkbeck's "ardour in the cause was not, however, to be restrained within such narrow limits. He at once determined to institute a gratuitous course of philosophical lectures, for the especial use of the *uneducated classes*—persons engaged in the actual exercise of the *mechanic arts*, and whose humble station in early life had precluded them from almost a possibility of acquiring scientific knowledge. These lectures abounded in simple but striking experiments, and were delivered in the most familiar language, so as to adapt them to the taste and capacity of such an audience. In this way he hoped to rouse a taste in the uneducated classes for rational amusement, as well as instruction; with the additional and almost necessary effect of weaning them from vicious habits, and frivolous pursuits. His success in the undertaking was complete; and hence it appears that Dr. Birkbeck was the first to establish a *mechanics' class*, to which the attendance of the *operatives*, as they are now termed, was especially invited; and a foundation thus laid for the various Mechanics' Institutions, which have since been formed in the metropolis, as well as most of the manufacturing districts of the kingdom."

Dr. Birkbeck quitted Glasgow in 1804, and after having delivered lectures to admiring audiences at Birmingham, Liverpool, and Hull, he removed finally to London, where he may be said to have commenced his professional career, in 1805. He was, for many years, an active member of the Medical Society; and he was one of those who opposed the attempt made to monopolise, and perpetuate in the person of a single individual, the chief honours of the society. Their efforts were unavailing at the moment, though they afterwards proved successful. Their failure, however, was the immediate cause of the secession of a considerable number of the most able and influential members of the society; and this led to the first formation of the Medico-Chirurgical

Society, that has since done so much honour to its founders. Dr. Birkbeck, as one of the opponents of the abuses in the old system, joined the new institution; though he for several years maintained his connexion with the parent society. Dr. Birkbeck was also for many years one of the physicians to the General Dispensary, in Aldersgate Street, the earliest institution of the kind in London; and which was principally set on foot by the late Dr. Hulme, of the Charter-house, and Dr. Lettsom. His connexion with the Dispensary continued for more than a quarter of a century, indeed till within the last three or four years, when, in consequence of the mercenary conduct of the treasurer and committee, in determining to maintain the highly objectionable practice of *virtually* putting up to sale, as it were, all the most efficient offices of the charity, the whole of the medical establishment, including the patron and president, his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, down to the apothecary's assistant, resigned their situations in disgust. "For his manful opposition to such sordid conduct, Dr. Birkbeck received the thanks of the leading medical societies of the metropolis, and different parts of the kingdom."

Dr. Clutterbuck, from his almost daily communication with Dr. Birkbeck for a long series of years, considers his professional character to have been of the highest stamp—"Acute in observation, discriminating in judgment, patient and cautious in prescribing and administering remedies, he was, as might be expected, eminently successful in practice; thereby, as well as by suavity of demeanour, insuring the entire confidence of his patients. He was thoroughly imbued with a knowledge of the principles and practice of our art, as at present subsisting; and, had his time and talents been directed exclusively, or even principally, to the study of medicine, he would unquestionably have enlarged the boundaries of the science; and thus have contributed to its extrication from some part, at least, of the obscurity, in which it is at present but too deeply involved." Dr. Birkbeck resided for many years in a handsome mansion, on the western side of Old Broad-street; thence he removed to a house at the south-eastern corner of Finsbury square, where he breathed his last. As a medical man, he is understood to have enjoyed considerable practice, much more so than is generally bestowed on those given to scientific or literary pursuits. Early in life, the Doctor appears to have displayed a strong inclination for mechanical pursuits, and to have embraced the medical profession at the instigation of his friends.*

Having, then, through Dr. Clutterbuck's excellent Memoir, glanced at Dr. Birkbeck's merits as a physician, it next becomes our duty to advert to the untiring and well-directed zeal of this amiable philosopher and philanthropist in what may be termed the *Education of the People*. And here we must observe, that, however Dr. Birkbeck's *colleborateurs* in popularizing science, and improving education, may have been kept before the public by their greater political celebrity, it must not be forgotten that Dr. Birkbeck was one of the earliest in the field—and the foremost in the great work—of the enlightenment of the people. We are aware that Dr. Birkbeck's precise share in this labour has been much controverted; and, although our investigation may not decide the *questio vexata*, we are in possession of some few facts which award to Dr. Birkbeck's exertions a higher claim to our respect than they have received, at least, in print.

Nearly forty years ago, Dr. Birkbeck, undoubtedly, founded a Mechanics' Institution in Glasgow; the following account of which, taken from a Prize Essay upon Mechanics' Institu-

tions, by Mr. David Burns, a member of the Glasgow Institution, may be acceptable to the reader:—"The circumstance of Dr. Birkbeck having been repeatedly disappointed by his mathematical instrument maker of the apparatus with which it was necessary to illustrate his lectures, (there being but one man in the city of Glasgow regularly established in this line of business at the time,) drove him at once to the workshop of the mechanic. Resolving to superintend himself the making of the necessary instruments, he visited the joiner at his bench, the smith at his forge, and the turner at his lathe. Brought thus into intimate contact with the artisans, he enjoyed the best possible opportunities of estimating the strength or weakness of their mental powers—of ascertaining by their shrewd observations and acute inquiries, their aptitude to learn, and the benefit which would accrue to themselves and to society, by their possessing a knowledge of the principles of science. Accordingly, having by his affable and obliging disposition, and the simple and forcible manner with which he answered the inquiries of the artisans, who generally gathered round him on such occasions, excited a strong thirst for further information, Dr. Birkbeck used his influence to procure for some of them admittance to the course of lectures he was then delivering at the Andersonian Institution. The use made of this privilege, and the disappointment expressed by those who, from the nature of that institution, could not enjoy it, set him upon devising some other means of imparting to them that information they were so eager to acquire. With a view to the promotion of this object, he convened, in February, 1800, the first Mechanics' Class.*

Twenty years later, or in 1823, we find Dr. Birkbeck taking a leading part in the formation of the first Mechanics' Institution in the metropolis;† not only by devoting his time to this laudable object, but by freely bestowing his purse. The large sum required for building the fine theatre of this institution was advanced by him in 1825, and is yet in part unpaid; and, by a singular and melancholy coincidence, the members had met for the purpose of celebrating its eighteenth anniversary, within a few hours of the period of its founder's death. "It is gratifying to be able to add, that the members of the institution, individually and collectively, have done him, as well as themselves, honour, by a testimonial expressive of the highest possible respect and affection for the memory of their deceased patron and friend. He was likewise connected with various other literary and scientific societies; in some cases, (as in that of the Mechanics' Institution,) as their presiding officer, and affording to all his powerful aid and support. That the moral, as well as the intellectual, character of the industrious classes, and indeed of the whole community, has been greatly elevated by the establishments now mentioned, can admit of no doubt; while

* "A society, if not so well organized for its purpose, still, in many respects of a similar character, was founded at Birmingham in the year 1790, and improved in the year 1797; another society existed in Spitalfields even of more ancient date, called the Mathematical Society; and before Dr. Garnet, (Dr. Birkbeck's predecessor,) ceased to be Andersonian Lecturer at Glasgow, a Mechanics' Class was connected with the Royal Institution in London, at the instance of Mr. Webster, the geologist, by the exertions of Count Rumford, the late Lord Winchelsea, Sir Thomas Bernard, and the Bishop of Durham, with the concurrence of Sir Joseph Banks, who was then president of that Institution. As a proof that this last was not a mere scheme never carried into execution, it may be as well to state that Professor Pictet, the learned editor of the *Bibliothèque Britannique*, in an account which he published of a tour through England, mentions his having visited the Royal Institution, and how much he was pleased with the School for Mechanics."—From *A Manual for Mechanics' Institutions*, prepared at a great cost of labour and money, by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and published by the Society in 1839; which volume deserves to be ranked among their most extensively useful labours.

† In Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane.

* "This choice was, perhaps, to be regretted, for such a pursuit was, undoubtedly, unsuited to his bent. Had he been encouraged to follow his own inclination, he might have rivalled the discoveries of Arkwright or Watt. But, unhappily, at this period, and for nearly half a century afterwards, it was customary for every man who had three sons to bring up one as a lawyer, a second as a medical man, and a third for the church; as if the mental, physical, and moral state of the community could ever be in such a lamentable condition as to afford employment to such a disproportion."—*Times*.

it is no less clear, that a very large share of the good thus effected, is to be ascribed to his individual exertions.*

With Dr. Birkbeck also, in conjunction with Mr. Brougham, originated the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge; a fact which appears to have been entirely overlooked by his biographers. Before us is a copy of the Prospectus of the first work announced for publication "under the superintendence" of the above society—viz. "*A Library for the People*;" consisting of a Series of Distinct and Complete Treatises on every popular branch of Science and Human Inquiry." The "Address of the Society to the Public" states, that "the demand for knowledge, and the economy of Printing, have enabled the SOCIETY FOR DIFFUSING USEFUL KNOWLEDGE to form and execute a plan of publication, which will bring information on every desirable subject within the reach of all, and enable the people at large to purchase the elements of every science, and of any particular science, at the moderate price of only Sixpence for each science." This Prospectus was written by Sir Richard Phillips, subject to the approval of Dr. Birkbeck, in the autumn of 1825; both of whom were then at Brighton, as well as the writer of this statement, by whose hand the Prospectus was actually penned. The first Number of the *Library for the People*, (Astronomy, by Mr. R. Mudie,) appeared early in 1826; but few numbers followed, and those neither satisfied the projectors of the Series, nor the public. Meanwhile, a committee of gentlemen, with Mr. Brougham as their chairman, commenced the publication of the series of Treatises entitled the *Library of Useful Knowledge*. Upon this, Dr. Birkbeck withdrew from the Society, and we do not find his name upon the Committee until the list for the year 1841. In 1839, however, the Doctor co-operated with the Society in forming an Association for establishing Intercourse among Mechanics' Institutions; of which Association he consented to become the first President; its main object being "to promote the foundation, and to facilitate the labours of institutions of every description for adult instruction; to collect and diffuse information concerning such institutions; and to point out the causes which principally interfere with their success." In 1839, Mr. Coates, the Secretary to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, reported the results of a circuit he had made, for the uniting of Institutions, which document will be found in the *Report of the State of Literary, Scientific, and Mechanics' Institutions in England*, published by the society in 1841; the whole exhibiting a most gratifying view of the progress of popular enlightenment during the above period.

When at Brighton in 1825, Dr. Birkbeck also issued Proposals for publishing "*A Comprehensive and Systematic Display, Theoretical and Practical, of the Arts and Manufactures of Great Britain and Ireland*;" to commence in January, 1826, and to occupy four years in publication. That such a work, from so competent a hand as that of Dr. Birkbeck, would have realized the expectations of its projectors, there cannot be the least doubt; but "the Panic" which followed the issuing of this Prospectus, and which depressed the publishing trade more than any other branch of enterprise, caused the above design to be entirely relinquished. About this time, Dr. Birkbeck co-operated with Mr. Brougham, and other distinguished individuals, in establishing the "London University," now University College, in Upper Gower Street; he also aided gratuitously, by his pen and otherwise, more than one periodical publication of the day. He assisted, by his valuable suggestions, Mr. John Nicholson, in the production of his *Operative Mechanic, and British Machinist*, which was dedicated to the Doctor; whom we likewise remember to have heard relate at Brighton, that he had contributed the article "Anatomy" to a cheap Encyclopedia, to assist the printer of the work, then in straitened circumstances. But the Doctor's aids of this kind are too numerous to mention; whilst his professional advice was freely given to such of the operative classes as applied to him. These good deeds rendered him extremely popular, not only in the metropolis, but throughout the country; but, conjoined with the decidedly liberal tone of Dr. Birkbeck's public conduct, they did not fail to draw upon

him political and personal satire, in the usual proportion that "censure is the tax a man pays for being eminent." Such was, however, but the humour of the day, and the ridicule soon lost its point; for, it should be added, that the very portion of the public press which kindled this feeling, was the first to bear testimony to Dr. Birkbeck's unsullied public and private life.

Dr. Clutterbuck observes: "As a man, Dr. Birkbeck was simple, unassuming, and artless in his manners; of unbounded benevolence, and inflexible integrity. He was beloved, as well as esteemed, by a large circle of private friends, admired, respected, and lamented, by multitudes of all ranks, who had profited by his instruction, or by his benevolence; and I may add, he was almost adored in his domestic circle. Such was our lamented friend, whose memory will live in the grateful recollection of future ages."

Dr. Birkbeck's habits and modes of life were simple, and even abstemious to an extreme: he patronised temperance societies, not only by his name, but by his exemplary abstinence. Yet this "did not exempt him from the inroads of disease, and that, sometimes, of an active, and even highly inflammatory character. From this, however, he recovered; and he continued to enjoy good general health, till about four years ago, when he suffered severely from catarrh, which confined him to the house for several months, but he eventually rallied. About a year and a half ago, he first complained of a distressing disease of the bladder, from which he continued to suffer most acutely till the powers of life were gradually exhausted.

"He died on the 1st of December, 1841, retaining the perfect possession of his mental faculties to almost the last moment of his existence."* He was buried at the General Cemetery, at Kensal Green, whither his remains were followed by a large concourse of the operatives of London, the committees of the Mechanics' Institutes of the metropolis, &c.

"In personal appearance, Dr. Birkbeck was a man between 60 and 70 years of age, with a quiet, reflective, beneficent countenance, a venerable and very unpretending aspect. In his disposition he was mild, and in his deportment unassuming. As a public speaker, he acquitted himself with credit; his ideas were always sound and practical, conveyed in appropriate language. These remarks have been drawn from one not accustomed to bestow undue praises on a member of the faculty; but in the language of Junius, 'the panegyric will wear well, for it has been nobly earned.'†

The best engraved portrait of Dr. Birkbeck is a large mezzotint, from a painting, by S. Lane, published 1830; which has been reduced as a frontispiece to the *Year-Book of Facts*, 1842. Another portrait is prefixed to one of the volumes of the *Mechanics' Magazine*.

George Birkbeck

BALLAD.

Oh! lovely and bright as the blush of the morning,
When balm-scented breezes awaken the spring;
And pure as the dew-drop the wild rose adorning,
And blithe as young birds when they're first on the wing:
Like an air-wafted sylph in a fond poet's dreaming,
She seemed as a vision of beauty to glide;
Her light tresses flowing, her eyes mildly beaming:
Oh! such was Naomi—of beauty the pride.

She spoke—and the flow'r-fresh'ning zephyr was round us,
For fragrance with melody flow'd from her tongue;
Though caught by her beauty, 'twas sentiment bound us,
Enchanting the aged—enchaining the young:

* Memoir, by Dr. Clutterbuck.

* Dr. Clutterbuck.

† Times.

Her mind so accomplished—so perfect each feature,
That art strove with nature the praise to divide;
Heaven seemed to confess her its loveliest creature;—
Yes, such was Naomi—of beauty the pride.

In scenes of retirement, thus modestly blooming,
Till those who should shield were bribed to betray;
And the rude spoiler came, who, a false smile assuming,
First wooed the young blossom,—then tore it away.
But cursed be the triumph, nor envied the feeling,
Of him, who in arts of seduction well-tried;
In smiles like a flower-hidden serpent came stealing,
To crush poor Naomi—of beauty the pride.

Now slow is her footstep—her heart inly pining,
And pale lilies are, where the roses have been,
And tears dim that eye, where the bright soul was shining;
Dejected and joyless the mourner is seen:
Her own living monument—statue of sadness,
She droops o'er the memory of hopes that have died;—
Of all that she was in her bright days of gladness,
When hailed as Naomi—of beauty the pride.

Kirtou.

L. L. L.

The Armourer of Paris.

A ROMANCE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAP. VIII.—*How Perinet stole the keys from his father, and how Isabelle took possession of Paris.*

THE hour of midnight was proclaimed from the bell-tower of the adjacent "Hostel de Rouen," and the watchword of the sentinels, passed along the ramparts from one to the other, died away in the extreme distance; as Perinet, with faltering step, left his own room, and advanced towards the couch on which his father was sleeping. Scarcely daring to breathe, he approached the bed. As he gazed upon Leclerc's calm features, a convulsive shivering ran over his frame, and he leant against the chimney-piece for support. But the light of a small lamp that was burning in the room, showed a portion of the chain, on which the keys of the gates were hung, just visible from under the old man's pillow; and the sight of this recalled him to the object of his adventure. Summoning up all his decision, he passed his hand to the head of the bed, and seized the chain; but slight as was the disturbance caused by the attempt, it had the effect of rousing Leclerc, who, accustomed to be called up at all hours to admit the constable or his emissaries, was awakened by the most trifling noise. The guardian sprang up, and fixed his gaze upon his son, as the latter drew the keys rapidly away, and concealed them beneath his cloak.

"Perinet!" cried Leclerc, with the confused ideas of a man whose slumber has been suddenly broken, "Perinet! what do you here?"

The armourer remained silent,—apparently stupified at the unexpected awaking of his father.

"Why do I find you at my bed-side?" continued Leclerc. "You have not slept yourself. Answer me—why do you remain thus gazing at me so vacantly?" Then mechanically passing his hand under his pillow, he ejaculated, "Where are my keys?—they are gone! Perinet, you have deceived me—you have stolen my keys!"

"I—my father!" confusedly replied the armourer.

"You have stolen them from beneath my pillow, as I slept. Restore them, immediately, and I will seek no further to demand the reasons for this black proceeding."

"They are here, my father," replied Perinet, drawing the bunch from his girdle; "they are here—but I cannot give them back—I must keep them."

"Restore them, I tell you," cried Leclerc.

"I cannot. They are in my possession, and must remain so. I have been degraded—degraded as a vassal,

before all! I spoke as a man, and was beaten!"—I held my peace, and still I was beaten! No one screened me—no one defended me! But I have the keys of Paris, and they will avenge me."

The old man turned pale with emotion, as he gazed upon his son. "I have kept those keys," he faltered out, "faithfully and truly, for twenty long years. The Bourgnignons are waiting for them—I know it. You have promised to deliver them up, even at the cost of my life!—Perinet," he continued, seizing his son's arm as he leaped from the couch, "my keys! my keys! Restore them, I implore you."

"Away!" cried the armourer, "you cannot have them—they are mine—leave them in my possession."

"Never!" cried Leclerc, clinging to his son with desperate energy.

"Away!" repeated Perinet, "I implore you—I command it—or you will drive my soul to perdition!" and he thrust the old man from him with such power, that he reeled and fell upon the bed.

"You have your hand upon your dagger!" cried Leclerc, in breathless accents. Perinet, do you not see how vainly you strive to draw it from its sheath? The gaze of your father has transfixed your arm to your side.—Boy! you have not calculated the task which you undertook: what remains to be done is beyond your power."

The armourer quivered beneath the reproaches of Leclerc. He drew the polished blade from its sheath, and cast it from him; then falling on his knees at the bedside, clung to his father's prostrate form. "Do you then kneel to me, Perinet?" exclaimed Leclerc: "Is it thus that you would say—'Old man, let me dishonour thee! What matter shame and infamy at thy advanced age!'"

"My father!"

"Behold me at thy feet," continued Leclerc, in bitter irony, "I—thy son—thy sole pride—whose deeds thou didst so love to vaunt, but whom thou canst not now speak of!"

"Enough, my father—spare me, I implore you!" cried the agonized son.

"It is with prayers and entreaties you would tell me all this," said Leclerc. "Rise, Perinet—you have struck a blow to my heart, far more cruel than your dagger could have given."

"You may curse me, father—you may kill me, an' you will; but I have sworn an oath, and I must accomplish it. Ha! we are interrupted!"

As he was speaking, a loud knocking was heard at the door, and the confused hum of voices, and tread of an apparently large body of men, rose from the street below. Leclerc went into the balcony to ascertain the cause of the disturbance; and Perinet, agitated by the slightest sound, concealed himself behind the heavy drapery, which, in accordance with the custom of the period, shrouded the door that led from his father's room to his own chamber.

A single glance sufficed to show Leclerc, that D'Armagnac was at the head of the troop of archers who now clamoured for admittance into his house. He, therefore, immediately descended the small flight of stairs in the body of the wall, and unlocking the wicket at the bottom, ushered the constable and a few of his leading men upon the ramparts.

"May I know your pleasure, Monseigneur?" asked the guardian of the keys.

For a few seconds, D'Armagnac made no reply. Then, assuming a stern expression of countenance, he pointed with his truncheon towards his guards. "You must follow those men, Le Clerc," he said, "the keys of the Porte St. Germain are no longer in your possession."

"The keys withdrawn, sir! Of what ill-doing have I been found guilty, to merit this disgrace?" asked the old man.

"Your son has committed a crime, for which his head ought to pay the forfeit," replied D'Armagnac; "and you are suspected of having assisted in his escape. This man," he continued, pointing to Bourdichon, who formed one of his escort, "has the commission to replace you."

"Constable, I implore you," cried Leclerc, "drive me not thus away in the middle of the night. To-morrow, monseigneur—wait but until to-morrow, and I will obey you."

"It is with deep regret I am compelled to act in this manner," replied the constable, coldly; "for I counted always upon your fidelity. Deliver the keys to Bourdichon, and follow my archers. Where are they?"

"There, monseigneur—in my chamber."

This conversation upon the ramparts had not been lost upon Perinet. The window which led out upon the platform was open, and being situated close to where he was concealed, his ear drew in every syllable. Aware that the keys must be produced, he hurriedly detached the one which opened the principal gate, from the iron ring on which they were placed, and then gliding across the room, placed the bunch upon the table; concealing himself once more behind the drapery, just as Bourdichon, at the command of the constable, entered the room to take his new charge. It was a moment of keen suspense to Leclerc, who, believing that Perinet still kept the keys, had expected Bourdichon would return without them. But his confidence was restored, as he saw the archer step out upon the ramparts with them in his hand.

"I pity you, Leclerc," said D'Armagnac, as the guardian silently took his place amongst the archers; "but the order once passed, cannot be revoked."

"Constable," exclaimed Leclerc, advancing and kneeling before him, "you will not repulse an old man, who throws himself at your feet, to beg the life of his only son. One word, one promise for his safety, and I shall rest content with my destiny. Is there nothing to hope for, monseigneur?" he continued, as he observed the constable's immovable features: "neither pity nor pardon? I will kneel to you then no longer, sir; but fate may do her worst. Gentlemen, I am your prisoner."

Thus speaking, he fell into the ranks of the guard that attended upon the constable, and the whole party then moved off along the ramparts, leaving only Master Bourdichon before Leclerc's house, and the sentinel who was upon guard over the Porte St. Germain.

As the sound of the retiring party died away, Perinet once more stole from his concealment, and hastily extinguished the lamp which Leclerc had left burning upon the table. Master Bourdichon continued gazing after the escort of the constable, until the blaze of the last cresset faded in the distance; and then feeling somewhat cold, and withal weary, entered the house, mumbling a variety of unconnected sentences relative to his new occupation, and the probable punishment or imprisonment which awaited the ex-guardian.

There was a small lantern-tower room at the summit of Leclerc's house, in which a light was constantly burning all night; as much for the purpose of keeping the sentinel on the alert, whose business it was occasionally to ascend and trim it, as to serve for a beacon to the traveller, over the rough bridle-roads and obscure paths that intersected the faubourgs of the old city. Finding that the lamp was extinguished in the room below, Bourdichon, after various futile attempts to kindle a flame from the few sparks amidst the embers on the hearth, groped his way to the foot of the staircase leading to this observatory, and as-

cended it, with the intention of re-lighting his lamp from the beacon above. This was exactly the proceeding which Perinet had wished to bring about. Gliding from the arras, he followed the bourgeois across the room with noiseless step; his progress being, moreover, covered by the incessant displacement of different articles of furniture, which Bourdichon, in his ignorance of their situation, was perpetually coming in contact with. At length, the archer discovered the door leading to the upper part of the house; which he had no sooner passed, than Perinet drew it to after him, and bolted it on the near side. Leaving the unconscious prisoner to continue his ascent, he returned to his old position; and ascertaining that the back of the sentinel was turned towards him, crept out upon the ramparts. But at the moment that he gained the parapet, the sentinel, apparently alarmed at an unexpected noise, gave the cry of alarm, in a loud impressive voice. Not an instant was to be lost. Perinet was convinced that the guard had perceived the troops of Burgundy in the Pré aux Clercs, where they had silently advanced, according to agreement. Springing upon the sentinel, who had climbed the parapet, apparently to obtain a better view of the country, he threw all his power into one effort, and hurled the luckless warder into the fosse beneath the wall. Then, hastily drawing a briquet from his pouch, he procured a light, and set fire to the draperies that surrounded the windows of Leclerc's house; having made sure that Bourdichon, in the event of the conflagration, could escape along the roof.

Already had the sentinels, aroused at the challenge from the Porte St. Germain, prepared to arouse the troops, and for that purpose now hurried along the ramparts in every direction. But, as the fire caught the furniture of the house, a thousand torches, in reply to the signal, burst forth from the champaign below; whose light was thrown back from the countless suits of mail that were now approaching the gates. Rushing down the staircase in the wall, Perinet threw open the portals, as the leaders of the Bourgnignian force came up to them; and in another minute they were pouring, with the force and impetuosity of a swollen mountain torrent, into the city. On they came, lighted by the flames from Leclerc's late habitation, and rousing the frightened citizens from their beds by their tumultuous entry; in the midst of which, encircled by a ring of blazing cressets, and guarded by a body of picked men-at-arms, Isabelle de Bavière rode through the gate, mounted on a splendid palfrey, the last present of the Duc de Bourgogne.

"We have done well, messieurs," she exclaimed, as she reined in her steed in the centre of the square: "Graville L'Isle Adam, you will seek the king, and make him your prisoner—we shall have gained nothing if he escapes us. And now to the Hotel St. Paul—'tis the abode of D'Armagnac; but remember—living or dead, his body belongs to Perinet Leclerc."

ALBERT.

THE EVENING WIND.

BY W. C. BRYANT, AN AMERICAN.

SPIRIT that breathest through my lattice, thou
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow;
Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
Riding all day their wild blue waves till now;
Roughening their crests, and scattering high their spray
And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea!

Nor I alone—a thousand bosoms round
Inhale thee in the fulness of delight;
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
Liveller, at coming of the wind of night;

And, languishing to hear thy grateful sound,
Lies the vast inland stretched beyond the sight.
Go forth into the gathering shade; go forth,
God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth;
Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest,
Curl the still waters, bright with stars, and rouse
The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
Summoning from the innumerable boughs
The strange deep harmonies that haunt his breast;
Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows
The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
And 'twixt the o'ershadowing branches and the grass.
The faint old man shall lean his silver head
To feel thee; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,
And dry the moistened curls that overspread
His temples, while his breathing grows more deep;
And they who stand about the sick man's bed,
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,
And softly part his curtains to allow
Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow.
Go; but the circle of eternal change,
That is the life of nature, shall restore,
With sounds and scents from all thy mighty range,
Thee to thy birth-place of the deep once more;
Sweet odours in the sea air, sweet and strange,
Shall tell the home-sick mariner of the shore;
And, listening to thy murmur, he shall deem
He hears the rustling leaf and running stream.

SLOW-POISONERS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY H. BELINAYE, ESQ.

LATELY, a Hindoo philosopher, raised far above his countrymen by his natural acumen, as well as by his acquired lore, lost altogether his peace of mind when made to behold, through a microscope, the myriads of parasitic monsters that floated in the water, and revelled in the very bloom of the fruit which constituted his food. It is not astonishing that, in the same manner, many persons of a morbidly nervous temperament should live in fear of slow poison, and accuse innocent persons, when they come to know the immense variety of subtle and deadly substances which can minister to the designs of the murderer—some stealing upon the body like a vampire fanning its victim to sleep, whilst the energies of life are absorbed. With such ideas uppermost, I have been consulted in cases of groundless suspicion: I have often been asked by strong-minded persons themselves, how far slow poison is to be apprehended; and how far, also, it can be employed undiscovered. If such injurious, and so frequently unfounded, misgivings prevail in domestic life, in history, on the other hand, the error is wholesale. The great historical poet only reported the general belief of mankind (allowing no prince to die without violent means) when he makes Richard II. rehearse

"The sad stories of the death of kings,
Some poisoned by their wives, some sleeping killed—
All murdered."

Under these circumstances, I only attempt to contribute such general notions and views as may stimulate inquiry, and such very limited personal experience as one not exclusively devoted to medical jurisprudence can possess. Some physicians, like Beckmann, have made "secret poisons" the groundwork of very able, but very brief sketches. Others, on the Continent and in England, have tricked out the subject into *ad captandum* essays. These short notices can scarce answer, still less refute, the ponderous volumes which are daily seen to puzzle the historical inquirers at the national library of the British Museum; still less can they meet the new doubts and anxieties suggested by modern crimes perpetrated in high circles of society.

Independently that the notions as to slow poisoning, however exaggerated in sound minds, are far from being unfounded

in some important respects, the state of crime, at the present day, naturally encourages these thoughts and apprehensions.

The moral may truly be said to precede the physical poison. With passions wildly excited by the immoral writings of the evil geniuses of the day, more than one Madame Laffarge has appeared.

This most extraordinary paradox cannot be made too generally known—that in certain morbid states, in persons of a highly nervous temperament, there is no propensity of man, and of woman particularly, so intense as that of doing the very deed of which they have the greatest horror; but which, by its very magnitude, absorbs and fascinates the intellect. Once excited beyond certain measure, crime becomes irresistible; and to confirm this paradox of the human mind, we have the experience of the many medical men who have seen mothers openly murder children they tenderly loved, after conjuring the nurses to withdraw them out of their reach. Such I believe to be, in some measure, the explanation to Madame Laffarge's own character, that compound of every thing apparently amiable and every thing really horrible—whose innocence, to this day, has its champions amongst the faculty and legal men—even amongst churchmen.

I think that, on duly sifting the present subject, it will be found that there is, in the way of *slow* poisoning, comparatively little indeed to apprehend. A remarkable dispensation of Providence, in this respect, appears to watch over mankind, whilst science daily discovers new deadly elements. As far as certainty of detection can prevent this species of crime, the prevention is found in our art. For legal medicine may almost be said to possess now that power which the old romances ascribed to supernatural beings: it can wake the dead from the tomb; show where the poison found its entrance, held its deadly course, and make the victim, as it were, point at the assassin, and say, Thou art the murderer! * * * Involved in some difficulty from its very nature, historians have seconded the vulgar in surrounding the subject of slow poisons with every species of delusion and exaggeration. Far from the most deadly poisons being due to recent chemical philosophers, the researches of science have not added more powerful poisons to the list than the voyages of travellers amongst savage nations. Independently that such is the perversity of mankind, that in the history of the world the first steps made in chemistry have always been seen to arise from a search after poisons, as Sismondi has justly observed; nature abounds in poisons. What can exceed the power of the poison with which the Indian of Guiana tips his arrow, and then brings down a bird on the wing, which if it did not die on the spot, would be lost in thick jungles which overspread that primitive soil? We have in our antipagan days our *aruspices*, who, like Cicero, think certain animals "*rerum augurandarum causa natas esse*." These high priests of science, like Brodie or Magendie, examining the viscera of creatures still living, employ the poison of the Indians, such as the wooraroom, not the venenous salts discovered by science, to control the resistance and to abolish pain in the animals they operate upon. The only striking instance where a newly-discovered element was employed of late years as a secret poison, was by Dr. Castaing, who with cold-blooded villainy, poisoned two brothers, his benefactors as well as his patients. The acetate of morphine, although thus administered by a physician of high medical education, who had his patients entirely at his mercy, produced at least in the last of the murders he perpetrated, as sudden a death as the oil of laurel given, in a celebrated instance, to Sir Theodosius Boughton by his comparatively ignorant brother-in-law. In the case of Laffarge no savage and awkward butcher could slay an untethered ox with more ruthless violence than Marie Capelle in operating by repeated doses of arsenic upon her husband. In the ever-memorable and true tragedy of Sir Thomas Overbury, although he likewise was at the mercy of his murderers, for six months they could not kill him by slow poison; and the satellites of the King James's favourites were obliged to resort to suffocation for his "*coup de grace*." Arsenic, in the first of these cases, was the poison exclusively employed; in the second instance, it was also the principal

ingredient, although combined with lunar caustic, cantharides and spiders. Slow and secret poisoning by arsenic, it is difficult to believe in, as producing the infamous object in the manner at least reported in the majority of cases. We employ it as a tonic, and, if this and other tonics be gradually increased by small additions, it would make a patient another Mithridates.* It appears probable one would get accustomed to it, in the majority of instances, as we do a species of domestic poisoning we are daily exposed to, that from the verdigris of ill-tinned copper saucepans, the source of the dyspepsia, but seldom of the death of the victims of incautious cooks. La Spars, to whom so many deaths, in Italy, are attributed in the sixteenth century; Tophana, who sold the oil passed off as exuding from the tomb of St. Nicholas of Bari, and who was still more murderous than his predecessor, cannot have produced slow deaths by these salts, as Dr. Hahnemann, the father of homœopathy, asserts. Arsenic, if the stomach gets not accustomed to it, particularly if increased in quantity, must produce fresh and sudden suffering every time it is taken, however disguised. The effects of small doses of active poison, when not in extreme dilution, are proved by the practice of Hahnemann's pseudo-disciples themselves.

The less honourable amongst the homœopaths, (allopaths at heart, and not trusting to what Voltaire sily called "l'art d'amuser le malade, pendant que la nature le guérit,") employ such exceedingly violent medicaments, as in very minute doses, and infinitely small volume, can produce an effect.† Thus have we seen a nobleman, known all over Europe, die suddenly—and poisoned, according to the verdict of the jury—for having taken six instead of two pills at a time, whilst of ordinary homœopathic medicine, the quantities of some million doses, are ordered at once by such incorrigibly ignorant practitioners as that allopathic faculty, of which I am a humble adherent, although thanking heartily Hahnemann for banishing large doses of medicine from practice, and showing once more to clear sighted men the effect of rigorous diet alone.

It is hard to believe that the great personages of history were poisoned by medicated gloves, bouquets, saddles, slippers, handkerchiefs, &c. like Henry the Sixth of Germany, the wife of Henry the Fourth of France, a prince of Savoy, a king of Naples, and others without number. It is as diffi-

* To show the power of habit, it is not only that in the pursuit of short-lived dreams of happiness our opium-eaters swallow constantly immense quantities of that drug; and that Haitch, that aphrodisiac which, far more powerful as a poison, as well as far more wonderful in its effects on the imagination, is swallowed with equal impunity. For an instance more in point: in Dr. Strohmeyer's work we have the case of a Tyrolean peasant, who swallowed for years ten grains of arsenic with his dinner as a stomachic. And again, a Turk, whom Byron has immortalized, who lived to be one hundred years old, swallowing daily corrosive sublimate in large quantities, a fact confirmed by highly talented medical observers. Perhaps the effect of the use of calomel in India, the abuse of it by laymen, and still more by medical practitioners in England, further corroborate my views. Here a grain of calomel is the inevitable and simplest of remedies given to infants. As life advances the doses are increased, until at advanced age the hypochondriac may be said to be converted into a moral as well as physical barometer.

† I could adduce several instances from my own observations of the most serious effects of homœopathy—some in cases where minute doses of violent medicines were administered; and others of cases of violent inflammation, where patients have been brought to the brink of the grave by the neglect of active remedies. Dining one day at Blackwall, I asked my amiable and eccentric neighbour, the late Lord D—, what it was we saw him swallow when he was coming across the garden. "I bled myself by two of these admirable homœopathic pills," answered the bon-vivant. It did not prevent the agreeable episcure from tumbling down in a fit before dinner was ended, and the old-fashioned medical man bleeding him, and that with a lancet.

cult of credit as that perfect harmony was restored to a married couple, who were previously constantly at daggers drawn, by removing a bundle of hyoscyamus seeds concealed in the room where they habitually sat, as stated in the *Grand Dictionnaire de Médecine*. Still less conceivable is it that the secret poisons employed by Catherine de Medicis, and those that La Spars, La Tophana in Italy, La Vigoreux, and La Voisin in France, made a regular commerce of, could produce death by being used as prescribed at the distance of one or six months, according to the pleasure of the murderess. Amongst the great number of young married women of rank, whom the Pope had executed at Rome in the seventeenth century, for poisoning, most of the slow-poisoners were probably guiltless. Madame de Sévigné's inimitable *Letters* convey the exaggerated terror which, no doubt, possessed Louis XIV., when he established the *Chambre Ardente*; and amongst the ladies of noble and even of royal blood, whom the monarch so unreservedly and impartially punished in his reign, La Brinvilliers is the only one unequivocally proved to be culpable: and even here Voltaire has justly pointed out the exaggerations of the *avocat sans cause*, who has reported her crimes and her fate. During the ages up to a recent date, when that witch mania prevailed, of which fancy so many thousand innocent persons were victims, not only did ladies pride themselves as much on being bewitched as they do in our days in being bewitching; but there exists irrefragable proof of women, with the rack before their eyes, insisting upon their power of incantation, and, to the last agony of torture and of death, preserving this ruling passion—the monomania of insane vanity. Cannot the past *furor* of historians for slow poisoning, in many instances, receive the same explanation?

For those cases of poisoning which are of most habitual occurrence, the vegetable reign affords the most deadly implements. The aqua lauro ceruis has given place, it is true, to a more dangerous and scientific form. Prussic acid is the more dangerous poison; but opium, in its many forms, is the poison which the police should most watch. The sale is far from being sufficiently restricted. The salts of lead, whether we judge of them by the palsy and other symptoms produced so insidiously in painters, and in persons who partake of them in wine, in whose adulteration it is so freely used; these salts are most dangerous, slow, and secret poisons.

As to my own opinion, after having wasted much time, that might have been better employed, in perusing the voluminous and dusty records of history, I utterly disbelieve in the ability of the utmost perversity to produce slow poisoning once in a thousand attempts.—*Abridged from the Medical Gazette.*

THE BEAUTY OF BRABANT.

THE chronicles of the town of Donauwerth, on the Danube, contain the following melancholy tale, which might form the groundwork of an interesting drama:—

"The beauty of Maria of Brabant was so highly celebrated, that she attracted princely suitors from nearly every royal house in Europe, among whom she selected the handsome Duke of Bavaria, Louis V., for her husband. Her loveliness of person and amiable disposition created in him the most violent attachment, and he hardly ever permitted her to be absent from his sight a moment; her slightest wishes were gratified, and the court resounded with festive mirth and gaiety. At length, business of great importance compelled the duke to leave home, and the indisposition of his beloved consort alone prevented her accompanying him: however, previous to his departure, he took the precaution of placing her under the especial care of his own confessor, the captain of his body guards, and his favourite sister Elizabeth, queen dowager of Naples. Only a few days had elapsed after his departure, when Louis wrote to his adored Maria, and dispatched the letter by a courier. On the return of the messenger, the duchess transmitted two letters, the one sealed with red, and the other with black; the former was addressed to her husband, and the latter to Graf Heinrich von Ruchen, aid-de-camp to the duke; at the same time, the

courier received the strictest orders not to permit the letter addressed to Graf Heinrich to be seen by the duke.

"By an unlucky chance, the ill-omened mistake occurred. Louis, on perceiving the superscription, instantly recognised the hand-writing of his wife; and, without waiting to examine the contents, in a paroxysm of mad frenzy, stabbed the unfortunate courier to the heart! A prey to the wildest rage of jealousy, he now mounted his horse, and rode, day and night, until he arrived at Donauwerth. The first person he encountered at the palace was the captain of the guards, whom he caused to be immediately put to death. He then rushed, like a maniac, to the chamber of his wife, whom he found engaged with the queen of Naples in embroidering a banner. The infuriated husband seized his beautiful victim by the hair, dragged her to the place of execution, and, in a voice of thunder, commanded her to prepare for instant death. In vain she protested her innocence; in vain implored for mercy. The supplications and tears of the queen, who threw herself on her knees, together with the venerable confessor, and the loud lamentations of her maids of honour, were equally unavailing; the ruthless tyrant caused the unfortunate princess to be instantly beheaded! During the convulsive agonies of death, a locket, which she was accustomed to wear next her heart, flew open, and disclosed to the eyes of the agonized few who witnessed the murderous scene, the portrait of her husband! Her countrywoman and attendant, the young and beautiful Thekla von Faunenberg, the betrothed of Graf Heinrich, shared the same fate; and the rest of her attendants were exiled, or sentenced to be imprisoned for life. This deplorable event took place on January 18, 1256, in the eighteenth year of the age of the lovely heroine of our tragic tale."

Thus far the chronicles of Donauwerth; those of Brabant supply some additional elucidations, and tell us, that the letter of the princess to Earl Heinrich, contained nothing more than an injunction to surprise the duke, by displaying the banner on the next grand field-day, and which was to be sent to him privately for that purpose in a few days: thus, the fond wife was probably enjoying the pleasing anticipation of her husband's delight when he viewed her pretty present, at the very moment he rushed in to destroy her.—*Germany and the Germans.*

LAMBETH PALACE.

(From the John Bull.)

AMONG the many noble mansions which adorn this great metropolis, there is not, perhaps, one more deserving of the notice of the curious in these matters than Lambeth Palace: the residence during long centuries of the first subject under the English crown—of the ecclesiastical head of the reformed church in England—of a prelate next in dignity to the pope, while yet the church in England formed but a branch of the church of Rome. Lambeth Palace has from time immemorial constituted a leading feature in what may be called the architectural arrangements of London; but though massive and venerable always, it is to its present amiable occupant that the archiepiscopal palace stands indebted for whatever of true comfort is to be found within its gates—of comfort so conferred, too, as in no respect to take away from the character which belongs essentially, and ought essentially to belong to it. We must endeavour to describe the edifice as it is, without touching more than may be necessary on the historical associations connected with it; for the space at our disposal is by far too narrow to permit our entering with anything like minuteness upon so extensive yet so deeply interesting a subject.

Lambeth Palace stands upon the right banks of the Thames, midway, or nearly so, between Vauxhall and Westminster bridges; at a point where, from the opposite side of the river, it is confronted by Westminster Hall, the Houses of Parliament, and Westminster Abbey. If you approach it by land, you must cross Westminster-bridge, and take a wide circuit, so as to compass streets and lanes innumerable; after accomplishing which, you drive round an angle of the parish

church, and find yourself suddenly in front of the main entrance. If you take advantage of one of the many steam-boats which ply all day long from London bridge to Chelsea, you will be landed at once on a temporary pier close to the palace. Whichever route you follow, the object of your curiosity is first presented to you in the same point of view; for so completely is the mansion, with its extensive gardens, shut in by the humbler dwellings of man, that in the course of time have been gathered round them,—that except from the river side, no view can now be obtained by any passer-by of that which he may desire minutely to inspect.

Looking at the pile from the deck of a steam-boat, or, which is the same thing, from the site of the new Houses of Parliament, you are struck by the gloomy aspect of its dark red towers, two of which abut so closely upon the tower of Lambeth church, as to convey the idea that the latter building is the chapel of the palace; the remaining two, thrown considerably back, towards the east, are connected with the two first by a red brick wall, which, as it is a mere excrescence on the original pile, so is its continuance where it now stands endurable on one plea alone, namely, the plea of necessity; for the truth we believe to be that it was built by the present archbishop's immediate predecessor, Dr. Mannors Sutton, as a defence against the predatory attempts of burglars, more than one gang of whom had visited, or endeavoured to visit, the plate-room of the palace.

Having landed from the steam-boat, and mounted certain wooden steps, which conduct to an open space near the parish church, you make a half-wheel to the left, and find yourself confronting the low arch-way, beneath which lies the means of carriage ingress into the courts of the palace. The arch in question, with its antique oaken gate, and a low and strong postern door adjoining, are both set in the face of a dark red wall, which, as used to be the case in ancient fortifications, is furnished with a machicolation, and is flanked on either hand by a square tower. There is something venerable in the extreme in the external aspect of this part of the edifice. As you look up upon the small grated windows, the old brick-work, faced with discoloured stone, and the battlements over head, you are carried back in imagination to those times of trouble and strife, when even a Christian bishop conceived that he might not dwell in safety unless his house were a fortification, and his domestics armed and disciplined for battle. But there are other associations than these connected with the towers now before us. That upon your left, as you now stand, is called the Lollards' Tower, because in chambers within, which we shall presently visit, the early heralds of the reformation were imprisoned. That on the right has, we believe, no distinguishing name, though probably it, not less than its fellow, has been witness to strange scenes.

You either ring or knock; on hearing which signal, a respectable looking porter opens the postern door, by passing under the portal of which you are introduced into a sort of covered court, having an open court or yard beyond it. On your right hand is the lodge, similar in its construction and general arrangement to that of one of the greater colleges in Cambridge or Oxford; on your left, a low and narrow doorway, which conducts to the bottom of a steep staircase, by means of which the different chambers in the Lollards' Tower are reached. Let us mount the staircase together. It is steep and spiral, the steps being made of wood, and it conducts at the termination of each flight to a narrow landing place. A strong oaken door of great antiquity confronts us at the first of these. We push it back; and behold we are denizens for the moment of one of those narrow cells, within which, in an age of barbarism and bigotry, more than one good man pined his life away. In the brick-work are still imbedded the iron rings to which the Lollards were fastened. On the beams, and the walls too, you may trace fragments of devotional sentences, which the unhappy captives seem to have engraved there, it may be with the edges of the manacles that confined their wrists; while the rude benches and settles, which served them both for benches and couches, have with excellent taste been brought back, and replaced in their ancient positions. In one point of view, and only in one, the

poor Lollards seem to have been kindly dealt by. Their jailors did not cut them off from whatever enjoyment there may arise from the contemplation of gay scenes in which we are not allowed to play a part; the windows of all the Lollards' rooms, and they occupy three stories of the tower, look out upon the river, to which, though no steam-boats plied six centuries ago, the passing to and fro of the nobles' barges, and those of the city authorities, doubtless gave, at least on particular occasions, an air of life and of splendour.

Having devoted as much time to the examination of the Lollards' Tower as seems necessary, and stepped out upon the leads, so as to command a singularly fine view of the river and the city, we descend again to the flagged space beside the lodge, whence we prepare to pass into the sort of court which has taken its present form in consequence of the building of the long wall already alluded to. We see before us, to the right, a range of building, which from its peculiarity of structure might easily be mistaken for a chapel, at the further extremity of which stand two towers, not so massive as those which we are quitting, but in other respects similar to them. This long building, with its cross-surmounted belfry, its gothic windows, and sloping roof, used in days of old to do duty as a guard-room, and was, till the present archbishop's incumbency, wasted, by its adaptation to the purposes of a mere entrance hall. The present archbishop, with great good taste, and at the enormous outlay of something like seventy thousand pounds, completely revolutionised the habitable parts of the palace. That which was first a guard room, and next a hall, he converted into a library; while at the same time he pulled down the whole of the crazy apartments in which archbishop Sutton used to live, and gave us what we now find. The consequence is, that instead of passing along a narrow paved road, with dull flat plats of grass on each side of it, and entering a cold hall of enormous dimensions, and mounting by a flight of wooden steps to narrow passages, and saloons so shaped that without incurring much fear of censure you might easily have mistaken them for passages also, you cause your coachman to drive on, till, following a tortuous avenue, which leads beneath a second arch, you find yourself in one of the most beautiful court-yards of which London can boast. The court-yard in question is formed by the library on one hand, and by the habitable part of the mansion in front; and on the right, and in the rear, by a series of light walls, battlemented at the top, which screen off the stables, and divide the palace from the town. In the centre is a column of elegant freestone, to which three gas-lights of great power are attached, of which the surface extent of the area may measure perhaps 100 yards by 150. Through this you advance, admiring, as you draw on, the exquisite symmetry of the new building, which, though formed of Caen stone, is yet managed with such excellent skill, as to correspond wonderfully with the old red brick-work which seems to guard them. The style of the edifice is collegiate gothic. Its regular surface and battlemented parapets accord well with the oriel windows which confront you every where, and are in perfect keeping with the plain oak door, to attain to which you ascend a flight of perhaps nine broad stone steps. But here, so soon as the door is opened, a serious defect becomes apparent. Instead of finding yourself in a hall, or even a moderate sized lobby, you see before you a steep, straight stair, which, however elegant of its kind, because fabricated and formed of finely polished stone, reminds you, nevertheless, of the companion ladder by which you scramble to the quarter-deck of a line-of-battle ship. We are surprised that his grace, whose taste in architect is exquisite, should have consented to an arrangement so little desirable in itself, and so entirely out of keeping with the rest of the mansion. We suspect that he was misled by some suggestions of others; who, keeping in view that which agrees rather with a collegiate building than the habitation of a prince, forgot that to the perfection of the latter, a hall is quite as essential as a state drawing-room, or an adequate supply of chambers.

(To be concluded in our next.)

Varieties.

Smoking.—The most luxurious smoker I ever knew, (says Mr. Paget), was a young Transylvanian, who told me that his servant always inserted a lighted pipe into his mouth the first thing in the morning, and that he smoked it out before he awoke. "It is so pleasant," he observed, "to have the proper taste restored to one's mouth before one is sensible even of its want."

Billiards and Nine-pins, are almost the only games played in Germany. Hunting is unknown; and a game at cricket, or a rowing-match, would throw the nation into a fever.

Roman Fancy Bread.—The price of bread in Rome, when Pliny lived, was nearly the same or a little lower than it usually is in our day in London. The Romans made bread of very different qualities and prices. Pliny enumerates four descriptions of them—viz. *Ostrearii*, or loaves baked with oysters; *Artolagani*, which correspond with our cakes, or rather rolls; *Speustici*, from the quick mode of the preparation; and *Artpoticii*, or those baked in ovens, so called from the kind of furnace in which they were prepared. This last must have been of nearly the same quality as our middle sort of wheaten bread; and was sold, according to the calculation of Arbuthnot, at the rate of three shillings and twopence the peck loaf.

The Viennese Watchmen wear a large tin hat, turned up in front, a long leather apron, black gaiters, grey frock, with a leathern basket thrown over the shoulder, suspended to the belt à la militaire; armed with poles tipped with iron, they strike the pavement as the church-clocks announce the hour, and sing the song appropriated to it: the following is the midnight carol:

"Good people all, I pray take care,
And speedily to bed repair;
For midnight strikes, the day expires,
So shut your doors, and quench your fires."

In order that these watchmen may be separately distinguished and reported to the authorities, in case of misconduct, their tin hats and their frocks are numbered and marked by letters.

Sauer-kraut is a preventive against intoxication; for there is such an antipathy between the cabbage and the vine, that if planted in the vicinity of each other, the latter, however luxuriant it may previously have been, will in a few weeks droop, and eventually die.

Prophecy.—When Prince Poniatowsky was a boy, his mother consulted a celebrated deaf and dumb Bohemian gipsy, as to his fate, who recorded on a slip of paper the following laconic prediction: "Hüte dich von einer Elster" "Beware of the magpie!" This augury was not only disregarded, but nearly forgotten, until its remarkable fulfilment, by the Prince meeting with his death in the river Elster, (Magpie) during the retreat of the French army, after the battle of Leipsic, in 1813.

Clock.—Over the proscenium of the theatre at Frankfurt, is an illuminated clock, which is at once ornamental and convenient.

The Origin of wearing Masks is thus explained in Cibber's *Apology*: "When our authors took liberties with their wit, I remember the ladies were observed to be decently afraid of venturing barefaced to a new comedy; till they had been assured they might do it without an insult to their modesty, they came in masks."

William Rufus's Death is generally ascribed to a random arrow shot in the New Forest; but as his body was left on the spot, and only picked up by a cottage charcoal-maker, who in charity conveyed it to Winchester in his ordinary market-cart, and as Henry, his younger brother, then in the Forest, got crowned at Westminster on the following Sunday, it seems likely to have been an assassination. The cottager, Purkiss, caught William's horse, and kept the bridle, which, in 1805, was purchased of Purkiss' lineal descendant, by Sir Richard Phillips; and, until very lately, the same family lived in the same cottage, and followed the same occupation of making charcoal, and carrying it for sale in a cart to Winchester.

Smoking Oddity.—A coffee-house keeper of Vienna hit upon the following eccentric means of attracting customers. He had a china pipe-bowl suspended over a large circular table, of such gigantic dimensions, as to be capable of containing a pound of tobacco, and supplied with a sufficient number of tubes, to accommodate thirty persons at one time: the novelty succeeded—the coffee-house was constantly crowded—and the landlord subsequently transformed his pipe-bowl into a chariot.

Giants.—The custom of placing celebrated men in gigantic coffins, is a trick to make future generations believe that they were mighty in stature as well as in mind. In Turkey, this has had the desired effect: no orthodox Turk doubts that sultan This, or sultan That, or any other popular idol, was of the size of his coffin.

White-bait is caught in profusion in the Bosphorus; but the sword-fish ranks first with the epicures of Constantinople.

Lamb is more exquisitely dressed in the Turkish kitchen, than in that of any other country.

Caviar is consumed in vast quantities all over the Russian empire: it is also sent to Italy; Germany and France take considerable quantities, and England a little. Caviar is a shining brown substance, in small grains, exactly like bramble berries nearly ripe. It is obtained from sturgeons, which are taken in March, in millions, on their spawning beds in the mouth of the Danube, the Dnieper, the Don, or the Volga, where both nets and hooks are employed against the fish. The membranes of the roe being removed, the grains are washed with vinegar, or the cheap white wines of the country; next dried in the air, salted, put into a bag and pressed, and then packed in casks. "After all," says a recent tourist, "caviar is not worth the money: it is a bitter cucumber-tasted stuff; is eaten raw, with oil and lemon-juice, and tastes worse than Hamburg herrings or Swedish salmon. It is, however, one of the most valuable articles of Russian trade; the sales, external and internal, being probably rather above than below the annual value of two millions sterling. An inferior caviar is made from the rows of other large fish."

Salt is given to horses very frequently in Norway; it being a common practice at the post-houses to strew a handful upon a flat stone, often placed there for this purpose.

Catching Crabs.—The foxes at the North Cape are so sharp set as to outdo all others of their kind in cunning. Dr. Henderson assures us that having decided, by a mock fight, which is the strongest fox; they advance to the brink of a precipice, and taking each other by the tail, the weakest descends first, whilst the strongest forms the last in the row, and suspends the whole number till the foremost has seized the crab on the beach. A signal is then given, on which the uppermost fox pulls with all his might, and the rest assist him. This story must be borrowed from the joke of the Irishmen letting each other down from London bridge to catch the silver in the Thames.

The Speculation in Lobsters is very great. Thus, suppose 2000 lobsters to be received in London on a Monday in May, when they will probably sell for £80; whereas, if 10,000 should be brought into the market on the following day, they would sell for only £160! In 1816, one fish salesman in London is known to have lost £1200 per week, for six weeks, by lobsters!

Cronenberg Castle, at Elsinore, is one of the most beautiful Gothic structures in Europe. The elegance of its proportions give it, notwithstanding its great extent, the light and graceful air of a building raised wholly for its ornament; yet it is a strong and substantial fortress, projecting into the sea, garnished with scarps, ditches, stockades, and completely commanding the Sound in every direction. In this castle was confined the unfortunate Matilda, sister of our George III., and wife of Christian VII., through whose cruel jealousy she died broken-hearted at the early age of twenty-three. This ill-fated young queen wrote with a diamond on the window of one of her apartments, in Fredericksborg Castle, a line from Shakespeare—

"Lord, keep me innocent; make others great."
The pane of glass is now guarded from injury by wire.

The principal Street in Bergen is called *the Strand*, and is swept by the Abigails of the respective families living in it.

The Norwegian Cooks beat the dried stock-fish with a mallet, to render it softer and more fitted for boiling, just as our cooks formerly beat steaks before dressing them.

Drunkenness.—There is nothing more useless to the sons of the age than to drink too much ale: the more a drunkard swallows, the less is his wisdom, till he loses his reason. The bird of oblivion sings before those who inebriate themselves, and steals away their souls.—*Northern Poem.*

A Ready Answer.—When Clarke, the traveller, asked, in Sweden, what became of a woman who fell into the shaft of an iron mine that he visited, "Became of her!" said the man to whom he put the question, striking his hand forcibly upon his thigh, "she became a pancake."

The Norwegian Cod Fishery is stated to employ 6000 boats, with 25,000 men; the season commencing with February, and lasting seven or eight weeks.

Drinking.—The Norwegians appear to rival their Scandinavian ancestors in draining the bowl. Thus, a peasant boy will drink as many glasses of brandy as would floor a London coalheaver! It is, however, only 3d. or 4d. per bottle.

Odd Privilege.—The executioner of Christiania has the strange right of going annually to each house in that city to ask for money; and if he receive none, he is allowed by law to break a pane of glass.

A Wild-goose Chase.

Ah me! throughout the world
Doth wickedness abound!
And well I wot on neither hand
Can honesty be found!
The wisest man in Athens
About the city ran,
With a lantern in the midst of day
To find an honest man.
And when at night he sat him down,
To reckon on his gains,
He only found—alack poor man!
His labour for his pains.—*May.*

Coffee-houses in Turkey are the resting-places of benighted travellers, of houseless poor, of all in short who choose. The poor fellows, who sleep on the benches, pay nothing, and have the chance of getting a bit of supper from richer occupants.—*Slade.*

Cats.—A sou a day is allowed by the Genoese admiralty, for the support of a cat in each ship-of-war.

"Dutch Clocks" are made in Germany, "Dutch" being nothing more than a corruption of "Deutsch" (German).

An Escape.—Louis XVIII., when living at Dilligen, on the Danube, was once shot at, and the ball grazed his forehead; but the wretch who fired the musket was never discovered.

Battle of Blenheim.—The peasants, to this day, frequently plough up the bones of the slaughtered armies; and the foundation of the roads here is composed of them. This beats Alexander's dust stopping a bung-hole.

German Customs.—In the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, at Easter and Michaelmas, there are town and village horse-races, where the victor is rewarded with a richly-ornamented crown, which he wears on the top of his hat: he is called the king, and the second-best riders are also dignified with lofty titles. On May Day, it is customary to chalk three crosses on the doors of stables and farm-yards, to preserve the cattle from being bewitched. The peasantry attempt to prophesy the nature of future events, from the form which molten lead assumes when poured into water. On New Year's Eve, they look through the handle of an old key, at the roof of the house, where, if one of the inmates is to die the succeeding year, they believe they shall see a black coffin.

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